UFO Sighting
Near Chesterfield, Massachusetts

Fall, 1966

Submitted by:

David F. Webb
NICAP Mass. Subcommittee
APRO Field Investigator

and

Eugene F. Mallove
NICAP Mass. Subcommittee

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Synopsis of the Case

A single-witness sighting of a "gyroscopically stabilized" platform inside of a bowl-shaped UFO was made sometime during the fall of 1966. Two humanoid occupants were also observed aboard the object. The object was observed from an automobile traveling along a paved 2-lane highway (probably Route 143) near Chesterfield, Mass. toward Springfield, Mass.

On the night of the sighting, George C. Sanborn (a bachelor) was driving home to Springfield, Mass. from Chesterfield, where he and a Mrs. A. D. Bisbie (a widow) had attended a church meeting. Sanborn, aged 78 at the time, and Mrs. Bisbie. 90 years old then, often attended the meetings in Chesterfield and were familiar with the route. The couple had been acquaintances since 1930.

The time was between 10 and 10:30 P.M. and it was a clear night with no apparent wind. Although no Moon was visible, Sanborn thought it was bright outside, indicating that the Moon may have been up. He thought that the car windows, at least on his side (left) of the car, were open because he always tried to keep the windows down. Mrs. Bisbie was asleep throughout the entire sighting though Sanborn tried unsuccessfully to rouse her. Sanborn failed to mention the sighting to Mrs. Bisbie even afterwards - he claims that she would have been too frightened or disturbed by such a report. Mrs. Bisbie died in 1969.

Sanborn heard a noise to his left, across the road from the direction of a wooded tree-line. He immediately thought that an aircraft of some kind was landing in the woods. The sound was like that of a precision engine, like the sound of a sewing machine with perfect action, according to Sanborn. He asked the sleeping Mrs. Bisbie, "Do you hear what I hear?", but when she didn't awaken he decided not to disturb her.

The sound seemed very close and remained at a constant pitch for several minutes. Sanborn continued driving at about 40 mph. Soon after hearing the sound from the woods, he noticed a sizzling sound either coming from the hood of his car or somewhere over it. He noted no physiological effects or problems with the car during the sighting. As he approached the crest of a hill, the original sound cut off abruptly. He was sure at this point that a solid object must be very close and was wondering why he couldn't see it.

About ½ minute later the object did appear, seeming to come out from behind the tree line to his left. Sanborn felt that the object could have been over his car and dropped down toward the left side of the road. When first seen, the

UFO was about "three football fields" away (see sketch). The object was evidently at the height of the trees above the ground (40') at this time, because it seemed to touch their tops and blow them apart like a strong breeze.

Just before reaching the crest of a hill with a woods to the left the precision sound stopped to Mr. Sanborn's relief - he admitted to fear at this point. The object, which was seen ahead to come from the left over the trees, first appeared as a black kitchen basin form (see Figure 1.) whose upper surface was tilted, throughout the sighti 45° to horizontal so that only the bottom was visible to Sanborn. The object held this 45° inclination as it lowered in altitude and crossed the highway toward Sanborn's right. The object executed a startling, quick turn when it was over the right side of the road so that the upper side of the bowl (the inside) now faced Sanborn. The object still maintained a 45° inclination to the ground. At this point Sanborn claimed he saw a ring of amber and white lights (non-glaring in quality) around the rim of the bowl's upper surface. He found it difficult to describe the location of these lights on the craft so this point of the description remains unclear. Sanborn referred to a gyroscopically stabilized "deck" which was in the bowl and remained horizontal throughout the sighting -- he actually perhaps was recalling the horizontally stabilized float in the common automobile or boat magnetic compass.

The object or craft then moved from the right of the road back toward the left where it glided slowly into a cleared, recessed area among the trees and came to an abrupt stop about five feet above the ground and still overlapping the road about 15ft.. From the time Sanborn first saw the upper side of the bowl he viewed the form of a "large man" who appeared to be at the controls of the craft in the center of the deck and who also seemed to focus his gaze on Sanborn. Another "occupant" appeared from the center of the deck and walked briskly toward the deck's edge - in the direction of Sanborn.

Sanborn recalls that the object was slightly wider that the two lanes of the highway including the shoulders - about 80 feet, he says. There appeared to be a transparent top or dome covering the apparently very smooth deck. According to Sanborn there was "room on the platform for 200 men - see how dangerous it is to the country - the deck is capable of holding guns, ammunition ..." Both occupants wore long black overcoats to shin-length. They wore broad-brimmed hats "like the Amish". Sanborn claims he wasn't close enough to see expressions on their faces but he insists they appeared to be regular human faces. He believed it was their purpose to capture him - a belief stated several times during the interview.

Sanborn estimates that they were very big figures - at least nine feet tall. After witnessing all this Sanborn said he went right on "as fast as I could". He claims there were no other cars buildings or lights on this straight portion of the road. Sanborn's total estimated time for observing the object was five or six minutes. He emphasized that there was no sound during this visual observation of the object.

Sanborn claims that he experienced a weight loss of from 174 to 118 pounds in one year starting immediately after the sighting. He was hospitalized for 10 to 12 days in the autumn following the sighting though he could not give any medical terminology pertaining to his condition other than weight loss and that he was "just fading away". He claims that he never gave the UFO sighting a thought in connection with his medical problems though in retrospect he implicates radiation or radioactivity. Why does he now draw a connection? "Just because I read it in a book." (A direct quote from (2) hour-long tapes made of the interview.) Mrs. Bisbie was generally ill anyway so that no particular change in her health condition was observed. Sanborn claims he now requires a monthly injection of some red liquid prescribrd by the doctor - he could not be more specific. At the time of his hospitalization he claims he had some sort of bone marrow examination. He also mentioned that his under-sheet turned almost completely yellow after the sighting - a fact which he attributes to "the stuff working its way out of my system".

Some additional points were made in Mr. Sanborn's report to the investigators:

The entire sighting, including the perception of the sound, took according to Mr. Sanborn's best estimate 10 to 12 minutes. There was a ½ minute interval between when the sound ended and when the object was first sighted.

Mr. Sanborn drew a connection between the sizzling sound and spots of removed paint on the hood of his 1962 Ford (purchased in 1965). The paint came off some months after the UFO sighting so the connection with the UFO is uncertain. (See photographs, Figures 4 and 5).

Mr. Sanborn believes that his monthly injection is called a B-20 liquid. Perhaps it is really vitamin B-12 which he is getting.

Mr. Sanborn contacted Westover Air Force Base in March, 1972.

No E-M effects were observed with the automobile. The radio was not on at the time of the sighting.

Mr. Sanborn strongly felt that the occupants of the craft were people from the Earth.

The first seen occupant was operating a lever with his right hand. The lever resembled the arm of a paper cutter according to Mr. Sanborn. The left arm seemed to be manipulating what appeared to be buttons on a panel.

The deck seemed to have a gold color.

Mr. Sanborn gives very accurate estimates of the dimensions of the control cabin in which the first seen occupant stayed - 14' x 18' x 5½' high.

Mr. Sanborn saw what to him was an air intake port on the rim of the craft.

Conclusions

The manner in which Sanborn decided to report his sighting is of interest. He claims that for five years or so "it never occurred to me to talk much about it." Then apparently an Enquirer-type article caught his attention early in 1972. The article apparently described a UFO with an associated sound very similar to what he had heard back in 1966. He then started reading other books on UFOs which he obtained from the library. Sanborn "almost threw away" the books on UFOs which he was reading because he was "sick of hearing about procrastination" i.e. he was impatient with the disbelief of many in what he apparently believes to be the physical reality of UFOs. Sanborn wrote to John Fuller in March, 1972 through the publisher of one of Fuller's books, then callled him in Connecticut but Fuller was in Europe at the time. Finally, Sanborn made phone contact with Fuller on his return and was thus put into communication with NICAP. Sanborn also had written to President Nixon, Billy Graham, Henry Ford (Sanborn was formerly an automobile repair machinery salesman), and even Walter Cronkite - all apparently did not reply.

Mr. Sanborn believes in the conspiracy of silence theory concerning UFOs. He believes that the Air Force for one knows more about them then they are telling. He believes that the beings on board the craft which he claimed to have seen acted "too natural" to be from another world. He believes that the beings were trying to capture him and he twice emphasized "the danger to us" from this type of craft.

It is important to realize that we are dealing with a single-witness sighting, that the report of the sighting is being made years afterwards, and that the witness through his old age and obvious fertile imagination has undoubtedly altered the facts of the episode. The most critical defect in Sanborn's account is the extreme detail with which he recalls the UFO. The distances to the craft (if it was such) and the fact of a night-time sighting make observations of humanoid facial features, control panel, and control lever, seem doubtful.

One investigator, Mr. Mallove, does not strongly favor but does not discount the possibility that Mr. Sanborn was engaging in hoax with his report. For what purpose the hoax was attempted is not obvious. It is still possible that we are dealing with a strongly embellished occupant UFO sighting.

SCHEMATIC SKETCH OF SANBORN SIGHTING

UFO STOPS HERE

POSSIBLE INTERSECTING ROAD

PATH OF "CRAFT" (- - -)

TREE BLOWN APART

← CREST OF HILL → POINT OF FIRST UFO VISIBILITY – "THREE FOOTBALL FIELDS" DISTANCE TO UFO

WOODS

INCLINE

SOUTH FROM CENTER OF CHESTERFIELD TOWARD SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

TWO LANE HIGHWAY
MASSACHUSETTS RT. 143

FIGURE 1.

"KITCHEN BASIN" SILHOUETTE OF UFO SHOWING DIRECTION OF SANBORN'S INITIAL LINE OF SIGHT

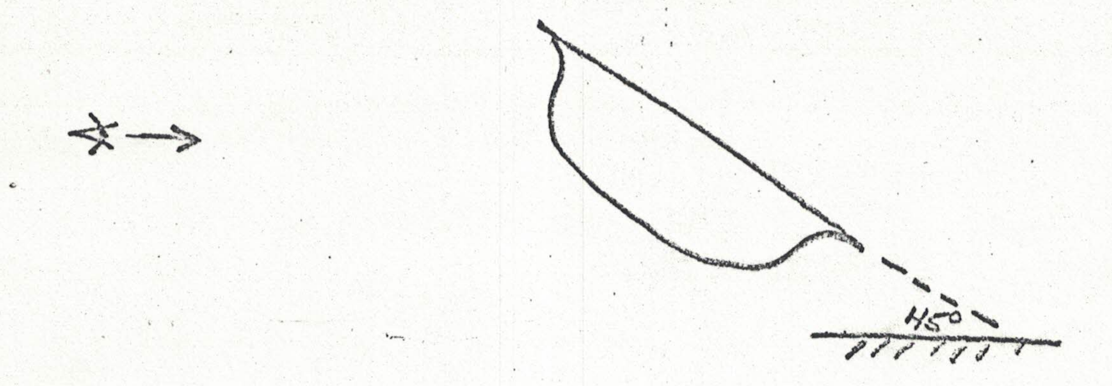


FIGURE 2.

LOCATION OF "GYRO-STABILIZED" PLATFORM

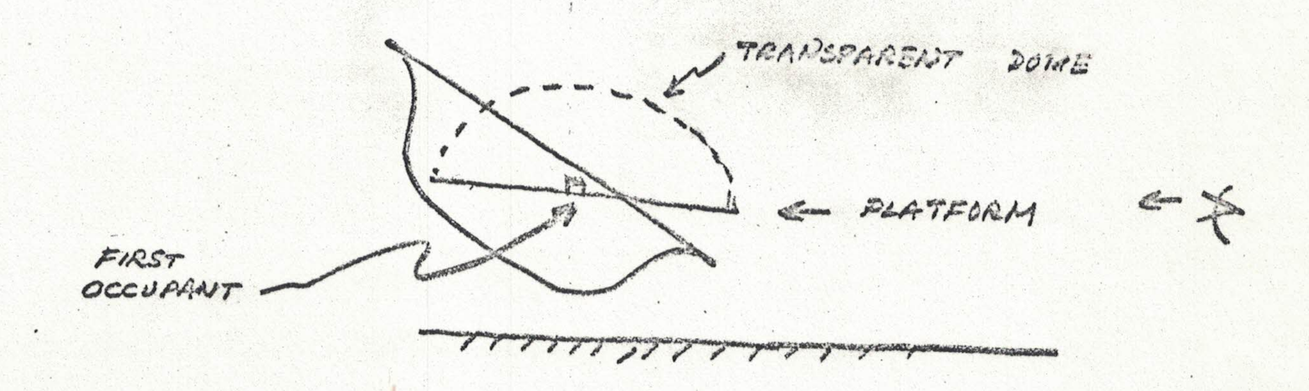


FIGURE 3.

TOP VIEW OF UFO SHOWING POSSIBLE LOCATION OF LIGHTS

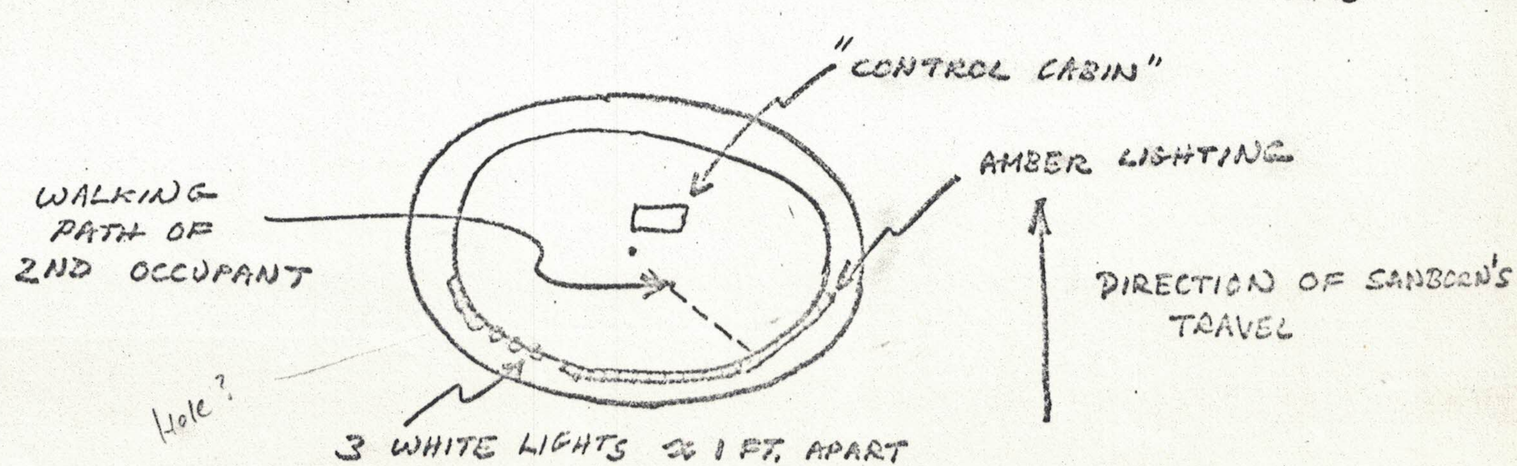
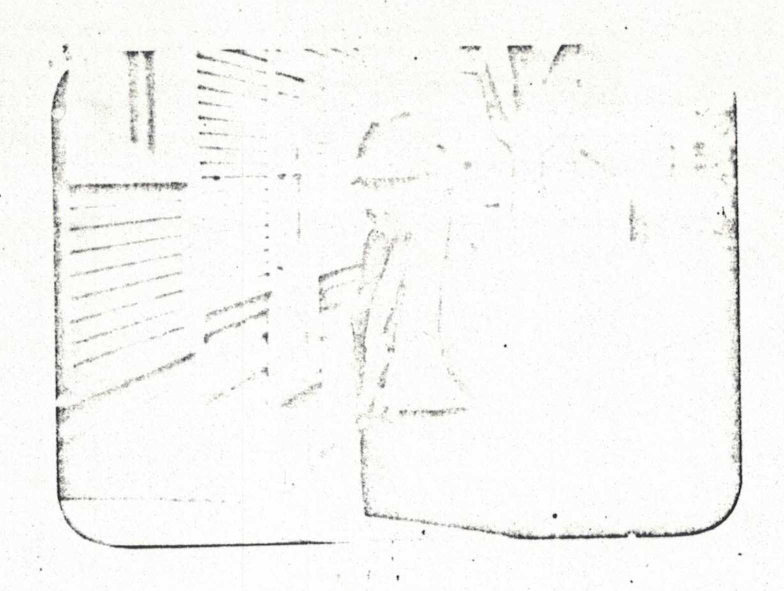


FIGURE 4.
MR. SANBORN OUTSIDE HIS SPRINGFIELD RESIDENCE, JUNE 1972



FIGUR 5.
MR. SANBORN AND DAVID WEBB EXAMINE SPOTTED APPEARANCE OF SANBORN'S AUTOMOBILE, WEBB USES COMPASS TO CHECK FOR MAGNETIC FIELD.

